



## Special Projects Competition Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Program

### **SPECIAL PROJECTS "G" ANNOUNCEMENT**

#### **Competition:**

Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Program

#### **Closing Dates and Deadlines:**

**April 15, 2021 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

#### **Eligible Sea Grant Programs:**

This competition is open to all Sea Grant programs. The project must take place within the United States or territories or their respective waterways. The focus must be on the Gulf of Mexico; however, because of ecological connections with adjacent fisheries, the project should also involve the South Atlantic and Caribbean. Furthermore, the project should seek to share knowledge and best practices relevant to the management of reef fish stocks in the U.S. Pacific Islands.

#### **Award Time Frame:**

The proposed start date should be no earlier than September 1, 2021, with projects to be completed no later than four years after the project start date.

#### **Funding Availability:**

The National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) anticipates that up to **\$1,600,000 (\$400,000/year for four years)** of federal funds will be available to a Sea Grant Program or a partnership of Sea Grant Programs in order to support a program extending reef fish science to end users, including fisheries managers, commercial and recreational industry stakeholders, and the Sea Grant Extension Network. The NSGO anticipates making one award to the lead Sea Grant Program. Applications require the standard 50% non-federal match for Sea Grant projects.

#### **Project Description (program priorities):**

The Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Program will establish a regional extension initiative to facilitate connection of fisheries science concerning reef fish stocks with end users. As part of this initiative, the program will produce extension inreach and outreach products aimed at extending science concerning reef fish, including, but not limited to, data and information produced from the recently concluded "Great Red Snapper Count," the ongoing Sea Grant Amberjack Research and South Atlantic Red Snapper Research programs, and from NOAA Fisheries Science Centers. The goals of this funding are to make progress toward achieving Sea Grant's desired outcomes in its Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture focus area by:

- 1) Facilitating communication, outreach, and delivery of fisheries research science products to end users, including fisheries managers, commercial and recreational industry stakeholders, and the Sea Grant Extension Network.
- 2) Providing increased support and building capacity in sustainable fisheries by working directly with stakeholders to identify additional research needs and communicating those needs to fisheries managers and the research community.
- 3) Supporting fisheries management by extending fisheries science with additional focus and resources.

**Application Requirements:**

Consult the NOFO [NOAA-OAR-SG-2020-2006435](#), available at [Grants.gov](#), for eligible applicants, required elements of the application, how to submit, general programmatic priorities and selection factors, and other necessary information. Submit your application to **SPECIAL PROJECTS "G"** under this Opportunity in grants.gov.

**Discrepancies between this special project announcement and the NOFO may exist. Specific application details and instructions outlined in this special project announcement take precedence over guidelines in the NOFO.**

Applications must include the following elements. Failure to adhere to these provisions may result in a delay in award processing or rejection of the application, based on the extent of the noncompliance.

**1. Project Narrative.** *The Project Narrative must include the following documents:*

- a. Project Description. The total number of pages in the project description should not exceed fifteen (15). Excess pages will not be included in the review. The works cited, CVs, letters of support, and current and pending support sections do not contribute to the page limit.
  - i. Cover page (1 page maximum)
    - Project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information (email and phone) of co-PIs.
    - Budget overview - Total cost and annual breakdown of requested funding by partner.
  - ii. Project abstract (suggested ½ page)
  - iii. Project background (suggested 3 pages)
    - Explain the specific problem(s) this project seeks to address and justify its importance.
  - iv. Project objectives (suggested ½ page)
    - Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of this funding opportunity.
  - v. Project details (suggested 5 pages)
    - Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives. Explicitly explain how this project leverages the expertise of both researchers and stakeholders.
  - vi. Anticipated outcomes and deliverables (suggested 1 page)
    - What are the expected outcomes and deliverables related to the creation of data products, tools, technologies, and management

practices that can be directly applied to the current and future needs of reef fish fisheries?

- vii. Project timeline (suggested 1 page)
  - Please provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work, which covers the entire duration of the project. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, including the accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and release of deliverables.
  - Applicants submitting proposals that involve the use of human test subjects should state so clearly in their application. These proposed research activities require approval of the applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before such research can proceed. Applicants are responsible for obtaining IRB approval from their institution and providing that documentation to NOAA once the approval is obtained and prior to any NOAA-funded human subject testing. Proposals intending to use human test subjects should specify clearly in the timeline approximately when IRB approval will be obtained and when the testing is expected to occur.
- viii. Outreach and technology transfer plan (suggested 2 pages)
  - Provide a cohesive strategy to ensure that end users across the greater geographic region, beyond those who actively participate in the proposed work, will learn about the project's outcomes.
- ix. Diversity statement (suggested 1 page)
  - NSGO recognizes it has a particular and unique opportunity to support NOAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion by taking an intentional step that encourages applicants to consider diversity and inclusion as part of their scientific projects. This action has the potential to make an impact on not only the diversity and inclusion in science at NOAA, but also beyond the agency. In this section, describe how the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender identities, sexual orientation, disability, geography, socioeconomic status, etc.) and how they benefit from its outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to review the resources and best practices compiled by NSGO related to diversity, equity, and inclusion: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation/Network-Visiting/DiversityInclusion>
- x. Works cited (does not count towards page limit)
  - All in-text citations should be listed here.
- xi. Curriculum vitae (CV) for each co-PI (does not count towards page limit)
  - Each person's CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.
- xii. Letters of support (does not count towards page limit)
  - All letters of support should be included here. Required in the instance that a Sea Grant program is applying on behalf of a partnership of multiple Sea Grant programs; otherwise, recommended but optional.
- xiii. Current and pending support (does not count towards page limit)
  - Describe any current or pending sources of support if applicable.
- b. Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)
  - i. Applicants must ensure that the questionnaire is completed in full and includes

detailed information regarding project location, methodology, and permits. Copies of all permits required for project activities should be included with application materials. If a permit is pending or planned, please provide this information.

- ii. The questionnaire can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>.

- iii. Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Forms/NEPA%20Questionnaire%20-%20Guidance.pdf>

- c. Data Management Plan

- i. This announcement is not seeking proposals that generate environmental data. Therefore, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the application.

**2. Budget Narrative.** *The Budget Narrative must include the following budget documents (Sea Grant 90-4 Forms and Budget Justification) in the following order and format. Additional budget narrative guidance can be found [here](#).*

- a. Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362)

Sea Grant 90-4 Forms are required to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications by year and object class for the proposal. A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form should be completed for each project year, as well as a total budget for the entire project duration (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, and Years 1-4). Guidance on filling out these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

- b. Budget Justifications

For each year of the project, a Budget Justification is required. Each Budget Justification should explain the budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. Each Budget Justification should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 Form, as appropriate. Guidance on completing the Budget Justifications is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

**3. Overall Application.** *In addition to the forms required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the application package on Grants.gov or on the Sea Grant website (links found below). These include:*

- a. SF-424 Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0004)

- i. This form, titled "Application for Federal Assistance," must identify the entire funding period, as well as the federal funding amount being requested by the applicant and the non-federal matching fund amount. The form must be completed with the institution's accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

- b. SF-424A Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0006)

- i. This form, titled "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs," should describe the entire funding period in federal and non-federal dollars, for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year. Each federal and match year should have its own column. If there is insufficient space, an additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B should be used (see below).

- c. Additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B  
(<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>, OMB Control No. 4060-0006)
  - i. The SF-424A Form described above only includes space to report the applicant's yearly federal and non-federal dollars over two years. If the application covers more than two years of federal and non-federal dollars, then please complete the Additional SF-424A, Extra Section B to report the yearly non-federal matching fund budget of the grant. Guidance on filling out the form is located in the Sea Grant How to Use Form "424A Extra Section B" Document: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Forms/Instructions-424A-ExtraSection-B-form.pdf>). This form is an outlier and will be added to the "Budget Narrative Attachment" section on Grants.gov, as described in Section IV. C. 2.
- d. SF-424B Assurances (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0007)
  - i. The form, titled "Assurances – Non-Construction Programs," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.
- e. CD-511 (Grants.gov, US Department of Commerce)
  - i. The form, titled "Certification Regarding Lobbying," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.
- f. SF-LLL (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 0348-0046) if applicable
  - i. The form, titled "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

#### **Application Evaluation Criteria:**

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. Note that the weights of each criteria are different from the Evaluation Criteria laid out in the Special Projects NOFO announcement. Proposals submitted to this competition will be evaluated by at least three independent written reviews based on:

#### **1. Importance, relevance, and applicability of the proposed project to mission goals (30%):**

This criterion ascertains whether the proposed work is relevant to the goals set out in this announcement.

#### **2. Technical and scientific merit (20%):**

This criterion assesses whether the proposal is technically sound, employs appropriate methods, and outlines clear objectives. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- A. Whether the proposal clearly identifies goals and objectives, and whether the timeline for the project is reasonable and in line with the award period guidelines;
- B. Whether the project will deliver tangible, specific results that are attainable and measurable within the proposed time frame.
- C. Whether the proposed methods and approaches to be used in the project are valid to achieve project goals.

#### **3. Overall qualification of applicants (10%):**

This criterion evaluates whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

**4. Project costs (10%):**

This criterion analyzes the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

**5. Outreach and education (30%):**

This criterion reviews whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources, Sea Grant's strategic focus areas, and the goals of the individual competition announcement to target audiences, including underserved and underrepresented audiences.

**Other Information:**

**Reporting:**

This will be a stand-alone (i.e., non-omnibus) award for which annual progress reporting will be required.

**Agency Contacts:**

Questions about this competition or the Special Projects Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may be sent to [oar.hq.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.competitions@noaa.gov). Please specify that your question is related to the Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Program Special Competition in the subject line.

Fillable versions of required Sea Grant forms can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>

Guidance for completing these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance

Document: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>